

## SUSTAINABILITY

# RAINWATER HARVESTING IN HOSPITALITY

Multi-pronged water management strategy is aimed at reducing water consumption by harvesting rainwater, writes **Rajneesh Malhotra**, COO, Chalet Hotels.

**W**ater is considered an everlasting source that is replenished naturally. However, several cities across the globe are facing acute water shortages. Effective water management is the need of the hour to deal with the emerging grim situation. Rainwater harvesting is not new to India. However, the country is said to only capture 8 per cent of its annual rainfall as most of the water is lost and dissipated into the sea. It is alarming since this water can be used to recharge the groundwater through rainwater harvesting. As per the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, in areas with limited water resources, the water consumption of a hotel can go up to 1,500 litre per room per day, far more than the local population. Tourists in certain areas use an average of nearly eight times as much water as the local population does, which is why the Indian Ministry of Tourism made it mandatory in 2018 for all hotels at the project stage or star classification/re-classification stage to include rainwater harvesting systems in their infrastructure.

Rainwater harvesting helps lower the ecological footprint by providing a sustainable and renewable water source. While groundwater is considered a non-renewable resource, rainwater harvesting is one of the most traditional and sustainable methods. It reduces dependence on external water sources, as rainwater can be easily stored and used for any purpose, including drinking (of course, after proper treatment). Harvesting is easy and low-

cost as the rooftops can act as a simple catchment area for the rainwater, which can be easily linked to the simple filtering and storing systems.

Hotels, being large consumers of water, must focus on sustainable usage and ensure their impact on the environment is minimised. Several hotel companies have acknowledged the need to conserve water and have taken several steps toward sustainability.

At Chalet hotels, sustainability

**“SEVERAL HOTEL COMPANIES HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED TO CONSERVE RAINWATER”**

is part of our vision statement. It is entrenched in the business philosophy and integrated into the plans right from the design initiation stage of projects and through their life cycle. As part of our sustainability initiative, rainwater harvesting is a very important aspect of our water management strategy. Chalet's multi-pronged water management strategy is aimed at reducing water consumption per available room with a zero-discharge of wastewater achieved by



recycling 100 per cent of water and harvesting rainwater. All Chalet hotels are equipped with a rainwater harvesting system, wherein rainwater collected in the harvesting tank is pumped to the water treatment plant for filtration through a series of filters including sand filters, carbon filters, and UV filters. The rainwater harvesting systems at Chalet properties such as JW Marriott Mumbai, Sahar, and Novotel Pune Nagar Road have storage tanks of up to 100KL to recharge their groundwater levels during the monsoon, while Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai, Vashi stores harvested rainwater in a 20KL tank, which is then used for flushing needs.

Water recycling is an effective way towards sustainability. Green thinking and the deployment of cutting-edge technologies could pave the way for a new era of rainwater harvesting. Water harvesting is currently limited to non-potable uses in most commercial buildings. Despite this, the benefits of rainwater harvesting in the hospitality sector are both practical and economical, thus triggering a lot of innovation.